

Arizona Department of Education Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction Diane M. Douglas

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Superintendent Diane Douglas Orders Exemptions for Food at School Fund-Raisers

(Phoenix, Ariz., Feb. 5, 2015) – Superintendent of Public Instruction Diane Douglas today announced the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) will immediately grant exemptions to federal Smart Snacks requirements that restrict the types of foods that can be offered at school fund-raisers.

"Forcing parents and other supporters of schools to only offer federally approved food and snacks at fund-raisers is a perfect example of the overreach of government and intrusion into local control," said Superintendent Douglas. "I have ordered effective immediately, that the ADE Health and Nutrition Services division grant exemptions for all fund-raisers for both traditional public schools and charter public schools."

Sen. Debbie Lesko, R-District 21, is the prime sponsor for Senate Bill 1267, which would codify the granting of exemptions in state law. In part, the bill was sponsored when a fund-raiser was told they could not sell snow cones after school unless the snow cones were the type specifically allowed on a list of snacks approved by the federal government.

"I appreciate the leadership shown by Senator Lesko and completely agree with her that this illustrates the ridiculous regulations so pervasive today in government of all levels. Like Senator Lesko, I have confidence that parents can decide whether or not to buy food for themselves or their children at fund-raiser events, just as easily as they make their own food choices when their children are not at school." Superintendent Douglas went on to say, "The thought that a federal bureaucrat knows better than parents what they can feed their own families is condescending and reprehensible."

ADE also revealed in the House Appropriations Committee yesterday that under the direction of the Superintendent, it will be forming a committee of school district officials, both current and retired, to review Title 15 and recommend by December of this year a list of other regulations and requirements in statute that are antiquated, overreaching, or unnecessary.

"I support Governor Doug Ducey's efforts to reduce regulation on business and believe the same should be done for school districts that are struggling with limited resources," Superintendent Douglas stated. "If a rule, regulation, or statute does not contribute to bettering the education of our children or providing financial accountability, it needs to be seriously evaluated for elimination. While this will not solve all problems, laws are continually added over time, but rarely, if ever, reviewed for removal when they no longer serve a purpose."